

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

In Opposition to L.D. 142

“An Act to Expand Deer Hunting Opportunities for Junior Hunters”

SPONSORED BY: Representative Hilliard of Belgrade

**CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative Dana of the Passamaquoddy Tribe
Representative Hobart of Bowdoinham
Representative Lyford of Eddington
Representative Pouliot of Augusta
Representative Stearns of Guilford**

DATE OF HEARING: April 21, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Bill Swan, Director of Licensing and Registration at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 142**.

L.D. 142 would allow an adult holder of an antlerless deer permit to transfer that permit to a holder of a junior hunting license if the holder of the junior hunting license takes an antlerless deer while in the presence or under the supervision of the antlerless deer permit holder. While the Department recognizes the good intentions of this proposed legislation, we have several issues with it that we would like to point out to the committee.

Several years ago the legislature passed a law allocating 25% of all Any-Deer permits to junior hunters. The result of that law change was that the vast majority of junior hunters now receive an Any-Deer permit in the lottery. Last year in 2014, nearly 90% of all junior hunters who applied received an Any-Deer permit in the lottery with only 652 junior hunters left without a permit through the normal lottery process. Current law also allows the transfer of Any-Deer permits to junior hunters before the start of deer season and last year 249 permits were transferred to junior hunters who had not won a permit in the lottery. Lastly, a junior hunter can take an antlerless deer on Youth day in any WMD where Any-Deer permits are allocated even if they did not win an Any-Deer permit or have one transferred to them. Due to all the opportunities just mentioned the vast majority of our junior hunters already receive an Any-Deer permit (either through the

lottery or by transfer) and all of junior hunters have an opportunity to take an antlerless deer on Youth Day each year.

The Department no longer issues physical permits for Any-Deer. This reduces cost to the Department and is actually more convenient for hunters. All the hunter needs to do is check our web-site, write down their permit number, and present that permit number at the tagging station. We no longer have problems with permits getting lost in the mail or lost by hunters in their homes or in the field once received. This proposed legislation speaks to recording information on a permit and returning it to the Department. This concept will not work because there is no longer a physical permit.

The Department is opposed to allowing the transfer of Any-Deer permits once the deer season begins. In this case, the proposal is to allow the transfer of the permit after the antlerless deer has been dispatched. Allowing this type of permit transfer may cause confusion and possible fraud in the field.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.